Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 14 with the following rewritten paragraph:

The inner element 11 is formed of a flexible, elongate filament or wire that is preferably made of a material that allows visualization under various medical imaging means, such as X-ray, MRI, or ultrasound. Preferably, the inner element 11 is formed from a length of wire made of any of various biocompatible, radiopaque metals, such as platinum, tantalum, tungsten, gold, titanium, nitinol, stainless steel, Elgiloy (cobalt-chromium-nickel), or other suitable alloys known in the art. Alternatively, it can be made from or include non-metallic materials, such polymers, collagen, proteins, drugs, and biologic materials, bioactive agents, therapeutic compounds, or combinations of these materials. If made of a non-radiopaque material, it should advantageously be doped or impregnated or chemically modified to be visible with one or more imaging techniques. Alternatively, it can be made of a material that is highly visible by means of MRI or ultrasound. The inner element 11 can be formed in various configurations, including, but not limited to, coils, rods, tubes, cables, braids, cut tubes, or other elongate, flexible forms. As shown, it is in the form of a helical coil, which may be preferred. In one specific embodiment, it is formed at least in part of a multi-filar coil configuration, as described in the co-owned and co-pending US Application No. ~~10/189,934;~~ 10/188,492, filed July 2, 2002, published as US Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0006362, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 6 with the following rewritten paragraph:

The intermediate element 12 may be formed as a coating, wrapping, tubular sleeve, or other construction to create a substantially continuous surface coaxially around the inner element 11. Alternatively, it can be formed into a cylinder and then skewered onto the inner core element 11, as described in the co-owned and co-pending US Application No. 10/157,621; filed May 29, 2002, issued as US 7,014,645, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference. The intermediate element 12 preferably covers all of the length of the inner element 11, except for short proximal and distal sections.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 14 with the following rewritten paragraph:

The intermediate element 12 may be made of any of various suitable, substantially non-metallic, biocompatible materials, including polymers, biopolymers, biologic materials, and combinations of these materials. Suitable polymers include cellulose, polypropylene, polyvinylpyrrolidone, polyacrylics, polylactides, polyamides, polyvinyl alcohol, polyester, polyurethane, polyglycolic acid, polyfluorocarbons, hydrogels, and silicones. Exemplary biologic materials include alginates, hyaluronic acid, fibrin, collagen and silk. Optionally, the intermediate element 12 can be impregnated, grafted, bound, or modified to deliver therapeutic compounds, proteins, genes, bioactive agents, or cellular material. See, e.g., US 5,658,308 and International Publications Nos. WO 99/65401 and WO 00/27445, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference. In one preferred embodiment, the intermediate element 12 is made of a state-of-the–art bioabsorbable or biodegradable polymer, such as, for example, those described in US Published Applications Nos. 2002/0040239 and 2002/0020417, respectively issued as US 7,070,607 and US 6,684,884, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference. In another preferred embodiment, the intermediate element 12 is made of a soft conformal material, and more preferably of an expansile material such as a hydrogel.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 5 with the following rewritten paragraph:

The most preferred material is an environmentally responsive hydrogel, such as that described in co-owned and co-pending US Application No. 09/804,935, issued as US 6,878,384, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference. Specifically, the hydrogels described in ~~Application No. 09/804,935~~ US 6,878,384 are of a type that undergoes controlled volumetric expansion in response to changes in such environmental parameters as pH or temperature. These hydrogels are prepared by forming a liquid mixture that contains (a) at least one monomer and/or polymer, at least a portion of which is sensitive to changes in an environmental parameter; (b) a cross-linking agent; and (c) a polymerization initiator. If desired, a porosigen (e.g., NaCl, ice crystals, or sucrose) may be added to the mixture, and then removed from the resultant solid hydrogel to provide a hydrogel with sufficient porosity to permit cellular ingrowth. The controlled rate of expansion is provided through the incorporation of ethylenically unsaturated monomers with ionizable functional groups (e.g., amines, carboxylic acids). For example, if acrylic acid is incorporated into the crosslinked network, the hydrogel is incubated in a low pH solution to protonate the carboxylic acids. After the excess low pH solution is rinsed

away and the hydrogel dried, the hydrogel can be introduced through a microcatheter filled with saline at physiological pH or with blood. The hydrogel cannot expand until the carboxylic acid groups deprotonate. Conversely, if an amine-containing monomer is incorporated into the crosslinked network, the hydrogel is incubated in a high pH solution to deprotonate amines. After the excess high pH solution is rinsed away and the hydrogel dried, the hydrogel can be introduced through a microcatheter filled with saline at physiological pH or with blood. The hydrogel cannot expand until the amine groups protonate.